

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration  
Office of the Administrator  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



May 2, 2003

TO: NASA Nursing Staff  
FROM: AM/Chief Health and Medical Officer  
SUBJECT: Recognition

May 6-12<sup>th</sup> marks National Nurse's Week, a time set aside to honor the valuable contribution of all nurses. This national observance coincides with May 12<sup>th</sup>, the birthday of Florence Nightingale. Formally recognized in the U.S. in 1974 by a presidential proclamation, the nursing profession touches each one of us many times during our lives. You are here when we need you the most.

Nurses are often acknowledged as being the best among all professions for their honesty and integrity that epitomizes the caring and helping nature of the healing arts. In our NASA clinics, often the first health care provider an employee sees is a nurse. You routinely provide caring concern and reassurance for the injured, the ill, and the worried well.

Nurses have always been there for the NASA family. Your profession composes the second largest discipline within NASA's health care system. When disaster strikes, you provide aid and solace. Nurses were there for the NASA family after Apollo 1, Challenger, and Columbia. When a Shuttle launches, nurses are there. When a Shuttle lands, nurses are among the first to tend to the returning astronauts. You were also there to lend support during and after the national tragedies of September 11, the anthrax scare, and most recently the war in Iraq. Frequently, you are the ones to recognize the build-up of stress in an employee, to listen to their concerns, and, if needed, to gently guide them towards NASA's employee assistance professionals or other appropriate community resources.

Trained in occupational and flight medicine, emergency medical response, and advanced cardiac life support, NASA nurses and Nurse Practitioners are an invaluable asset that directly affects the well being of all in our NASA family. We salute your profession, your long and valuable contribution to the Agency, and each of you individually; for the exemplary job you perform each and every day for the NASA family.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Williams".

Richard S. Williams, MD, FACS